

Defense of Marriage: U.S. Senate Votes on a Marriage Amendment

The Senate will vote in mid-July on a constitutional amendment to define marriage.

Why vote now?

- Gays and lesbians have a right to live as they choose, but they don't have a right to redefine marriage for our entire society.
- Marriage belongs in the hands of the American people, not activist judges. The public has a right to expect a response from their elected representatives to activist court efforts to redefine marriage.
- We need to send a message to our children about marriage and traditional family life and values. Marriage is our most basic social institution for protecting children.
- The American people deserve a full debate and vote on this foundational issue for our society. All Senators should go on the record for their constituents: Do you support protecting marriage as the union of husband and wife, or not?

This is a national issue: Same-Sex Couples From 46 States Have Marriage Licenses

Thousands of marriage licenses have been issued in Massachusetts, California, and Oregon. Press reports indicate that couples from all over the country have traveled to those states to receive the licenses with the full intention of returning to their home states. At least 42 states have statutes that define marriage in their states as the union of a man and a woman – now these laws are threatened by court actions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why would you deny homosexuals the right to marry the person of their choosing?

Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. Gays and lesbians have a right to live as they choose, but they don't have a right to redefine marriage for our entire society.

- Activist lawyers and judges have been working across the country to undermine marriage and impose a new national marriage standard without a public debate.
- Same-sex couples from at least 46 states have received marriage licenses in Massachusetts, California and Oregon.
- Currently, 11 states are facing court challenges to their marriage laws.

Why can't you wait and let the states decide for themselves?

The courts are dictating the timing. State actions to defend marriage are being threatened by state and federal courts. If we don't act, the issue may end soon in the Supreme Court.

- The Constitution is going to be amended one way or another – by the people's elected representatives or by unelected judges.
- **When activist courts strike down our marriage laws as "unconstitutional," the only way to protect marriage is with a constitutional amendment.**
- No Senator takes amending the Constitution lightly. After holding a number of hearings and monitoring developments, we believe now is the time to vote.

Isn't this an effort to use a divisive issue for election-year politics?

It was the Massachusetts Supreme Court that undermined marriage on May 17, threatening other states' marriage laws. We are simply responding to ensure that the people's elected representatives have a say about the future of marriage.